



Why is the element important?

Looking at the element in detail - educators must implement a program which reflects each child's:

1. What does the child **know**?
2. What are the child's **strengths**?
3. What are the child's **ideas** for the program?
4. How can we use the child's **culture** for the program?
5. What are the child's **abilities**?
6. What is the child **interested** in?

Practice examples of what we need to see in the program include:

Knowledge and ideas

- asking the children each day what they'd like to do.
- during activities a child's idea is followed up or extended upon.

Strengths and abilities

- from conversations with families, educators discover what the families think their child is good at, or is interested in.
- our observations followed up or extended upon.

Interest

- during excursions a child's interest is extended on or explored further.

Culture:

- hosting visitors in the service
- discussing holidays
- discussing shopping
- sharing cultural practices
- finding out about family jobs/interests/daily lives.

What could potentially go wrong if educators didn't do the above?

Lack of Engagement and Motivation: If the programme does not cater to the children's interests

or strengths, they may become disengaged and less motivated to participate in activities. This can lead to a lack of interest in learning and lower levels of participation, which in turn affects their overall educational experience and development.

Frustration and Behavioural Issues: When children feel their ideas or abilities are not valued or acknowledged, they may become frustrated, which can manifest in behavioural issues. This not only affects the child experiencing these feelings but can also disrupt the learning environment for others.

Missed Opportunities for Growth: By not recognising and building upon each child's strengths and abilities, educators miss out on opportunities to foster individual growth. This can lead to a one-size-fits-all approach to education, which does not meet the needs of all students and can hinder their potential for development in areas where they could excel.

Cultural Insensitivity and Isolation: Ignoring the cultural backgrounds of children can lead to a lack of inclusivity and sensitivity in the classroom. This may result in children feeling isolated or misunderstood, which can affect their sense of belonging and self-esteem. It also deprives other children of the opportunity to learn about and from diverse cultures.

Inadequate Preparation for Future Learning: Without a foundation that builds on what children already know and are interested in, there is a risk that they will not be adequately prepared for future learning challenges. This could impact their educational trajectory and success in later schooling.

Diminished Family Engagement: Families are less likely to engage with the educational process if they feel their child's strengths, interests, and cultural background are not being considered or respected. This can lead to a breakdown in communication between educators and families, which is crucial for supporting the child's development.

Decreased Self-Efficacy: Children develop self-efficacy through experiencing success in their endeavours and being recognised for their contributions. If educators do not acknowledge and build upon children's abilities and ideas, it can lead to decreased self-efficacy, impacting their confidence to take on new challenges.



You must practice

To address the issues that may arise from not implementing a child-centred program, educators can adopt practical strategies that ensure the educational environment is inclusive, engaging, and effectively supports each child's development.

Engagement and Motivation

Personalised Learning Plans: Develop learning plans that are tailored to each child's interests and strengths, ensuring activities are engaging and relevant. This approach helps maintain high levels of motivation and participation.

Choice and Voice: Offer children choices in their learning activities and encourage them to voice their preferences and ideas. This promotes ownership of their learning process and keeps them engaged.

Frustration and Behavioural Issues

Positive Behaviour Support: Implement strategies that focus on understanding the reasons behind behaviours and teaching positive behaviours through reinforcement, rather than punishment.

Active Listening and Empathy: Show genuine interest in children's feelings and perspectives. This helps in identifying frustrations early and working collaboratively to find solutions.

Growth Opportunities

Strengths-Based Approach: Regularly identify and document each child's strengths and areas for growth. Use this information to tailor activities that challenge them appropriately and foster development.

Collaborative Goal Setting: Involve children in setting their own learning goals based on their strengths and interests. This encourages them to take on new challenges and recognises their potential for growth.

Cultural Inclusivity

Cultural Competence Training: Engage in professional development to enhance understanding and respect for diverse cultures. This prepares educators to integrate cultural perspectives into the curriculum meaningfully.

Family and Community Engagement: Foster strong relationships with families and communities to bring diverse cultural experiences into the program. Inviting guests, celebrating various cultural events, and incorporating family traditions into the learning environment enriches children's understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Future Learning Preparation

Skill-Building Activities: Design activities that not only align with children's interests but also build essential skills for future learning, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity.

Reflective Practice: Encourage children to reflect on their learning experiences, discussing what they learned and how they can apply this knowledge in new contexts.

Family Engagement

Regular Communication: Maintain open and regular communication with families about their child's progress, interests, and development. Use various platforms such as newsletters, meetings, and digital tools to keep families informed and involved.

Family Participation: Create opportunities for families to participate in the educational program, whether through sharing their skills, participating in events, or contributing to decision-making processes.

Self-Efficacy

Acknowledgment and Encouragement: Recognise and celebrate each child's achievements and

contributions. Positive reinforcement boosts their confidence and willingness to engage in learning.

Problem-Solving Skills: Teach and model problem-solving skills, allowing children to navigate challenges independently or with minimal support. This builds resilience and a belief in their own abilities.

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you are doing well? Describe your practice in detail so it can go directly into you QIP or SAT (NSW only).

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you need to work on? Describe how you could improve your practice.